



NEW MEXICO STATE-TRIBAL LEADERS SUMMIT

2013 State-Tribal Leaders Summit Issue Paper Indian Education

The following Indian Education issue paper contains three sections – (1) Issues Identified by Tribal Leadership; (2) Potential Solutions Identified by Tribal Leadership; and (3) State Achievements. The N.M. Indian Affairs Department, in collaboration with the State-Tribal Leaders Summit Planning Committee, issued surveys to Tribal leadership in order to identify which issues and potential solutions should be discussed at the 2013 State-Tribal Leaders Summit. The “Issues Identified” and “Potential Solutions” discussed below do not necessarily reflect the views of the State of New Mexico and are merely provided to summarize the survey responses received. The “State Achievements” section has been developed with input from various State agencies.

Issues Identified by Tribal Leadership: In order to build a strong economy, our State needs an educated, innovative and entrepreneurial workforce. The importance of a strong and powerful partnership between the State and the Tribes, Nations and Pueblos (collectively referred to as “Tribes”), especially in the area of Indian education, cannot be overstated. Both parties would benefit from purposeful and meaningful collaboration regarding educational policies and initiatives. The Indian Education Division (IED) at the N.M. Public Education Department (PED) carries a lead role in facilitating regular communication and collaboration.

Tribal leaders express the desire to direct more funding toward services and programs that directly address Indian education needs. Tribal leaders request the consideration of changes to the State’s equalization formula in order to allocate a greater amount of Impact Aid funds to those school districts with high Indian student populations. The Tribes believe that such funding considerations, coupled with strong collaborative efforts, could address the long-standing achievement gap, Indian Education Act goals, and critical issues like reading proficiency, drop-out rates and graduation rates. Furthermore, Tribal leaders request that additional funding in areas such as language revitalization, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines for Native students, charter school development, alternative education programs, and workforce development programs.

Collaboration between Tribal communities, Local Education Agencies (LEA), school districts and school boards that serve large populations of Indian students is key to ensuring that the best education possible is provided to Native children. Important areas of consultation include school district Indian Policies and Procedures (IPP) and how school districts involve Tribal communities in administering school improvement grants. Both the State and Tribes would benefit from regular communication regarding how the IPPs are being implemented. Tribal leaders wish to ensure the use of culturally appropriate teaching methods. Collection and distribution of student-achievement data, teacher data, and student tribal membership data is important to ensure that Indian education needs are being addressed.

Potential Solutions Identified by Tribal Leadership:

- Frequent collaborative meetings on Indian education initiatives will strengthen governmental relations. In this regard, Tribal leadership recommends an Annual Indian Education Summit;
- Assurances that PED’s continual implementation of the Indian Education Act accomplishes Federal mandates and provides direct services to Native American students;

- Consider a process that uses State and Tribal commitment letters to ensure that IPPs are implemented;
- Ensure the LEA's use of funding aligns with goals set by PED to address Indian education needs;
- Consider providing information to Tribal leaders through periodic newsletters and through additional information sessions on important issues such as Impact Aid and Indian Set-Aside funds;
- Consider the benefits of initiating an audit of Impact Aid dollars and Indian Set-Aside dollars;
- Consider whether Indian Set-Aside funds could be allocated through a local tribal consortium;
- Explore whether it would be an appropriate use of State lottery funds and Indian gaming revenue sharing funds to allocate such funding toward Indian education initiatives;
- Exploring the availability of additional State resources to fund native language programs, such as State Bilingual Education resources, Impact Aid dollars, and other State funding;
- Explore state and federal legislative initiatives and programs that support tribal government involvement in the education of Native students, including the State Tribal Education Partnership (STEP) program, and the Native Culture Language, and Access for Success in Schools (CLASS) Act;
- Continue to develop and evaluate culturally appropriate teaching methods, potentially including teaching and providing assessments in a student's home language; and
- Look into assisting Tribes that may be interested in charter school development.

State Achievements:

- PED, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, is working on the New Mexico Real Results with Santo Domingo School-Bernalillo Public Schools and Mesa Elementary School-Central Consolidated Schools. The Real Results Plan was developed to improve the reading growth rates of students with disabilities in D or F schools.
- As part of the training for parents on reading literacy resources, PED and EPICS are working on translating materials for the Readers Raise the Roof! family blueprint into Navajo and make the materials more culturally relevant, in collaboration with Workshops-in-a-Box.
- The Navajo Nation was awarded approximately \$400,000 by the U.S. DOE for three years to build capacity for the Navajo Nation Department of Dine' Education to collaborate with the PED, the Central Consolidated School District, and the Gallup McKinley County School District to share student data and coordinate professional development opportunities around Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Navajo language teaching. The Final State-Tribal Education Pilot (STEP) Agreement to formalize this collaborative partnership will be executed by June 30, 2013.

At the 2012 State-Tribal Leaders Summit, a number of proposed solutions were presented to PED. The requests are summarized below along with PED's response to the identified issues.

- It was requested that PED-IED create, in phases, an administrative code to ensure the implementation of and accountability to the Indian Education Act, the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act, and the statutes governing teacher certification. To date, the following has been accomplished:
 - Consulted with the Indian Education Advisory Council and legal counsel;
 - Rules are being drafted and submitted to PED senior team; and
 - Notice of rulemaking needs to occur, followed by promulgation of rulemaking
- It was requested that the State consider changes to the state equalization formula so that a greater amount of Impact Aid funds go directly to school districts with high Indian student populations to directly impact Indian students, as well as to encourage Tribal input into how funds are spent.
 - As a State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Distribution state, an equitable distribution formula was adopted through the 1974 Public School Finance Act. Any changes must be considered and enacted through state legislation. PED continues to report to a number of legislative bodies on the allocation of State funds for education.
 - PED and IED have met with several Tribal communities and have facilitated information sessions and dialogue sessions on Impact Aid, Indian Set-Aside funds, the SEG formula and other important issues.

- It was requested that the State amend appropriate statutes, including the Indian Education Act, the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act, and the statutes governing teacher certification to do the following: Support and include instruction for proficiency in Indigenous languages as opposed to developing English proficiency under HERITAGE language programs; and require teachers to demonstrate competency in culturally-appropriate teaching methods for Native students in order to obtain a Level II Licensure. PED notes the following:
 - Amendments to any state statutes are within the authority of the legislature;
 - Tribes and Pueblos have sovereign authority and jurisdiction to deliver Indigenous language programs, including monitoring and assessment methods;
 - PED aims to provide educational opportunities that benefit all students;
 - English proficiency requirements are an important focus for the continued achievement of Native American students;
 - Tribes and Pueblos are encouraged to collaborate with school districts to ensure the use of culturally-appropriate teaching methods;
 - As PED develops an effective model of evaluation, teachers working with a significant number of Native American students will be able to demonstrate effectiveness and ultimately advancement of licensure;
 - Observation protocol will be aligned to meet local needs;
 - Technical assistance is available for Tribes to develop and revise their current licensure process to align with N.M. Licensure Tier System;
 - PED-IED will provide funding to all the N.M. Tribes for the support of revitalization, maintenance and sustainability of tribal languages annually;
 - PED-IED hosts and will continue to host dialogue sessions and work sessions on best practices for tribal revitalization, maintenance and sustainability; and
 - PED-IED conducts outreach to provide guidance and assistance for research models on Indigenous Research for N.M. Tribes.
- It was requested that State agencies prioritize a greater amount of funding to improve Native American student academic achievement and graduation rates through supplemental and enrichment programs that complement classroom instruction and are conducive to student learning styles.
 - The IPPs ensure alignment of State and school district programs and funds with Tribal education goals, including reporting on Indian Set-Aside funds.
 - All teachers are expected to effectively differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students, regardless of subgroup.
- It was requested that PED approval of a school district's annual budget be withheld until that district demonstrates its compliance with the Indian Education Act.
 - PED budget questionnaire to districts addresses compliance with Indian Education Act, PED goals, IPP, bilingual programs, etc.
 - Guidance on how to budget on a performance basis in compliance with the IEA is in progress.
 - Facilitation and consultation regarding the drafting of IEA Rules will uphold accountability and compliance mechanisms for the Act.
- Mandate that all educators who work with Native American students attend the culturally competency training facilitated by the Indian Affairs Department.
 - PED-IED will coordinate with the Department to work with Local LEAs for training.